
From: Peters, Joe
To: Bodisch, Robert
Sent: 8/7/2013 4:19:16 PM
Subject: RE: About Those Free Voter ID Cards — Few Sign Up

Thanks for the heads up. I read the Trib article earlier today. Just FYI, we met with DSHS officials last Thursday regarding the possibilities of them providing free birth certificates for EIC applicants. They are receptive to doing that if DPS could somehow verify that the birth certificate is being requested in connection with an EIC application. We proposed some near term email solutions at low or no cost to us and a longer term, less time consuming process that would involve our CSRs being able to directly query the HHSC database for confirmation. Still working on requesting a blessing from OGC and working out potential security issues. I am scheduled to talk via phone with them again at 4:30 pm to get an update from their end.

Joe

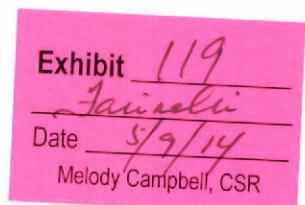
Joe Peters
Assistant Director
Texas Department of Public Safety
Driver License Division
P.O. Box 4087
Austin, TX 78773
Office: 512-424-5899
joe.peters@dps.texas.gov



From: Bodisch, Robert
Sent: Wednesday, August 07, 2013 4:01 PM
To: Peters, Joe
Subject: FW: About Those Free Voter ID Cards — Few Sign Up

FYI

Robert J. Bodisch
Assistant Director/Chief of Staff
Texas Homeland Security
Texas Department of Public Safety
P. O. Box 4087
Austin, Texas 78773
512-424-2368
robert.bodisch@dps.texas.gov
robert.bodisch.sle@dhs.sgov.gov





From: Bodisch, Robert
Sent: Wednesday, August 07, 2013 3:49 PM
To: Bodisch, Robert
Subject: About Those Free Voter ID Cards — Few Sign Up

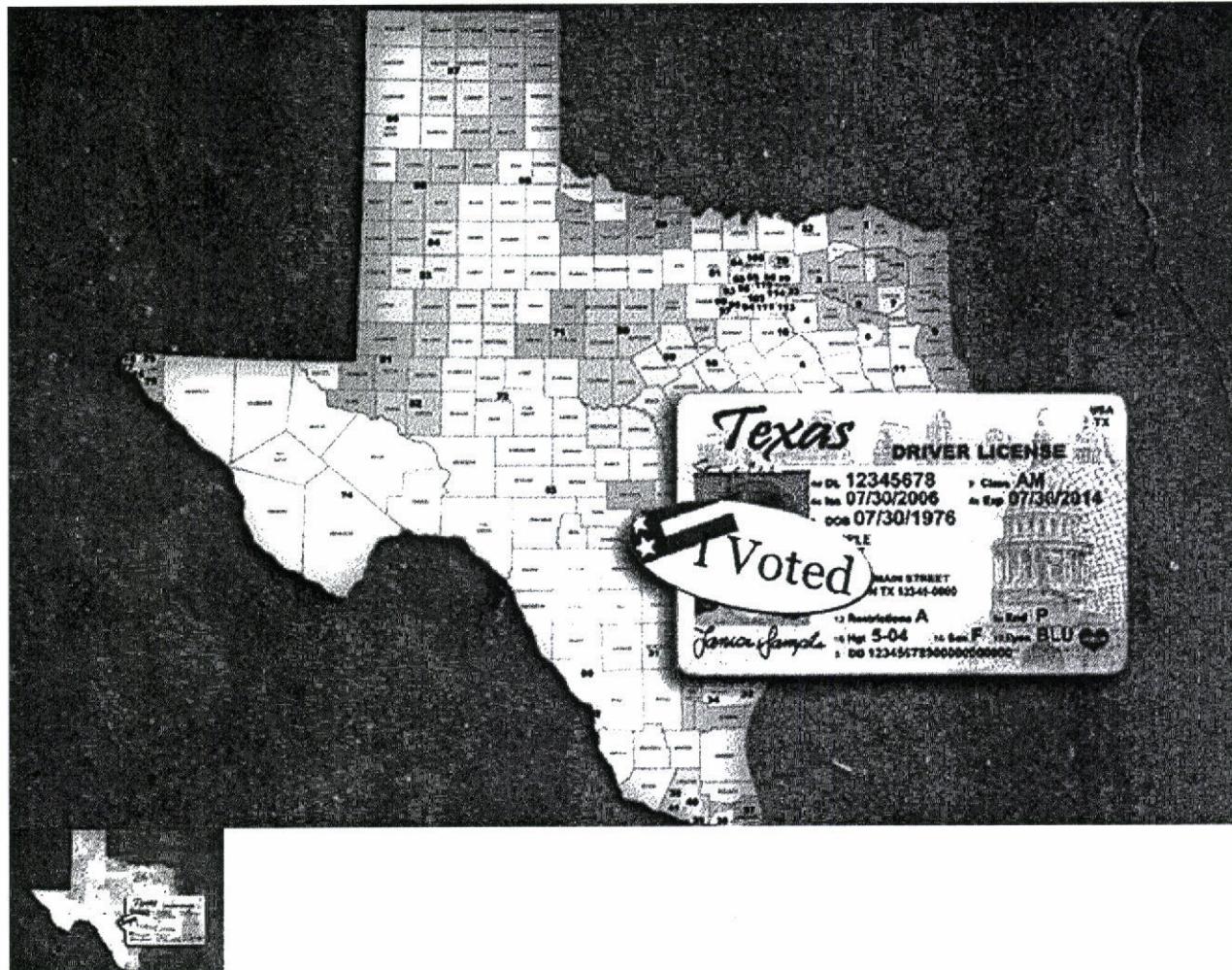
About Those Free Voter ID Cards — Few Sign Up



[Texas Tribune](#)

08/07 11:40 AM

08/07 11:43 AM



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Texans aren't exactly lining up to get the free voter ID certificates the Texas Department of Public Safety is required to distribute under the terms of the state's controversial voter ID law. Both sides say that's proof they were right.

Opponents of Texas' voter ID law were supposed to be somewhat placated by a component of that 2011 measure that requires that the Texas Department of Public Safety to issue free IDs to non-drivers interested in casting a ballot.

That would solve the problem of the hundreds of thousands of Texans without the money to pay for IDs, conservative supporters of the bill argued.

But a month after a U.S. Supreme Court ruling gutted a key component of the Voting Rights Act and paved the way for the state's implementation of the voter ID bill, Texans aren't exactly camping out at DPS offices to get their voting credentials. As of July 26, the department had issued six of the documents, an average of about one a week, across the state. Texas DPS spokesman Tom Vinger said the documents were issued in Lampasas, Austin, Snyder, Skidmore, Jacksonville and Dallas.

When asked what the dismal figure means, friends and foes of voter ID rehashed their old arguments.

"It proves what we all suspected to be the case — that it's highly unlikely that anyone wouldn't be able to meet the ID standard laid out in the bill," said Beth Cubriel, the executive director of the Texas Republican Party.

Cubriel conceded there would be another "surge" — a term she used loosely — as election dates near. She lightheartedly added that it would likely resemble the first rush — the half-dozen issued so far.

Vinger said there had been about 50 inquiries about the EICs, but many found they already had the necessary documents. Alternatives include a Texas driver's license or ID, a passport, a concealed handgun license, a passport or passcard, or a military ID or naturalization certificate.

The American Civil Liberties Union of Texas said the numbers are so low because the required documents are nearly as difficult to obtain as a driver's license or ID.

"We know, from evidence in our photo voter ID case, that this law adversely affects poor, black and Latino Texans. So we're not at all surprised to hear that few Texans have been able to take advantage of this supposedly free ID," said Rebecca Robertson, legal and policy director for the ACLU of Texas. "It costs money to get the underlying documents, such as a certified copy of your birth certificate, which you need to prove to DPS your eligibility for the free ID."

The Texas Democratic Party is keeping with that same message. Tanene Allison, the party's communications director, said the time spent getting the free card equals money thrown away.

"Anybody who has ever struggled knows that time is money," she said. Like the GOP's Cubriel, she said the numbers may rise as elections, and interest in them, grows. But the TDP spokeswoman said the free IDs won't make a dent in the overall problem.

"The bottom line is that voter ID disenfranchises Texans," Allison said. "I imagine those numbers will rise but they won't match the numbers of Texans who need them."

As far as the U.S. Department of Justice's latest efforts to once again subject Texas to federal review of voting laws — that's happening through last month's legal filing from U.S. Attorney General Eric Holder — Republicans aren't too worried about that. At least not yet.

"We're confident in the [Texas] attorney general's ability to defend our state's rights in Texas," Cubriel said.

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Robert J. Bodisch
Assistant Director/Chief of Staff
Texas Homeland Security
Texas Department of Public Safety
P. O. Box 4087
Austin, Texas 78773
512-424-2368
robert.bodisch@dps.texas.gov
robert.bodisch.sle@dhs.gov



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